



## Winter 2021 Newsletter



Happy New Year friends! It's only February but the Friends of Portland Community Gardens Board has been busy planning and looking forward to great things for 2021.

### **2020 Community Reflections**

For many of us, gardening was a source of uplift in a year like no other. We reached out to some gardeners at Brentwood South Community Garden to share thoughts about their garden experience in 2020 and wanted to share some of the comments we received (we couldn't agree more!):

This is my first year at the community garden. I got my plot not long before Covid hit and I was furloughed from my job. It gave me sheer joy to have something healthy and positive to focus on. Not to mention being able to share wonderful produce from my garden. – Lisa E.

This was my first year running a garden by myself (without parents or professors) and it feels like a radical act. With so much uncertainty about the future, planting a garden feels like planning for the future and it's a lot of the time the only thing that has kept me going. Taking care of the earth in a time where it seems like it's cared about less and less, brings hope to my heart. – Jasper K.

The garden space has been a sanctuary. It's been a place where I could tune out, experiment, succeed, and sometimes fail, see magic happen, share the abundance and learn from fellow gardeners. Thanks for this great question and reminder to keep moving forward and looking ahead. – Sue H.

## Friends of Portland Community Garden 2021 Updates

Our Board met in January to sit down and consider our goals for 2021 and we're excited to share some of our plans and aspirations.

### Gift cards for Garden Managers

We are planning to repeat providing funding for each Garden Manager in each Portland Community Garden to support the needs of their garden – from coffee and donuts to rakes and hoses.

### Mason bee houses

Last year we were able to expand our Mason Bee program into an additional 15 gardens. We will continue this program this year including building and distribution of mason bee houses, proving bee cocoons, and training on the life cycle and management of the bees.

### Plant seeds and starts

We are currently exploring options for helping to supply gardens with plant seeds and starts. This is something that FPCG has done in the past and was suggested that we bring this program back. We are still working on what this might look like and anticipate our biggest hurdle may be finding space for growing the seedlings. More to come.

### Spring Planting Grant from Oroweat

In 2020 we were fortunate to receive a Spring Planting Grant from Oroweat. Because of the pandemic our plans for this grant have been postponed into 2021. We will be directing the grant funds to the Produce for People Program. This program works with gardeners to grow produce that gets donated to local food banks so fresh vegetables can be on the menu for their customers.



### 2021 project ideas

Do you have any projects that you would like Friends of Portland Community Gardens to help with in 2021? Send your ideas to us! [info@portlandcommunitygardens.org](mailto:info@portlandcommunitygardens.org)

## Right Now in the Garden

### Planning for planting

Winter is a wonderful time to sit inside, cozy and warm, and dream of your spring/summer garden paradise! The days are getting longer and the threat of snow will be over soon enough. 2020 saw an influx of new gardeners and this manifested in shortages of plant starts and seeds last year. Get planning now (the early bird does get the worm).

- Seed planning: start by making an inventory of any seeds you have from previous seasons. Various seeds have differing life spans; older seed may have lower germination rates. To avoid disappointment, you can test the viability of older seeds by placing seeds in a moistened paper towel and place in a warm location and observe how many seeds germinate. Once you

know what you have, study seed catalogs and make a plan for varieties you want to plant. You can find seed catalogs online or get them mailed to your doorstep.

- Planting calculators/calendars: there are many online resources available to help you plan your garden. Check out tools like this [veggie planting calendar](#) from Portland Nursery (they have lots of great brochures to peruse) or [these tools](#) from Johnny Seeds.

## Get your hands dirty

There are a few things you can do now to get a head start on the growing season and maintain perennial plants.

- Start seeds indoors: now is a good time to start onions and cole crops (cabbage, cauliflower, broccoli, and brussle sprouts).
- Grow under cover: place cloches, tunnels, cold frames, or hoop houses to get an early start on vegetables or flowers.
- Prune: February is a great time to prune fruit trees, berries, and deciduous summer blooming shrubs. The OSU Extension Service has some great [guides](#) to help you navigate this work along with more recommendations for February gardening.

## Support FPCG

Looking for more ways to support Friends of Portland Community Gardens?

- You can make a donation on our [website](#).
- The AmazonSmile Foundation will donate 0.5% of the purchase price from your eligible [AmazonSmile](#) purchases. The purchase price is the amount paid for the item minus any rebates and excluding shipping & handling, gift-wrapping fees, taxes, or service charges. Just add Friends of Portland Community Gardens as the nonprofit organization to your account.
- If you shop at Fred Meyer, you can help support Friends of Portland Community Gardens through the Community Rewards program. Just designate FPCG as the nonprofit to be linked to your Rewards Card. Any transactions using the Shopper's Card number will be applied to the program with no added cost to you. Click [here](#) for more information.
- Follow us on [Facebook](#) for updates and events.

Friends of Portland Community Gardens (Friends) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization whose mission is to support and expand community gardening opportunities for all Portland-area residents to grow healthy food and build community around gardening.

For over 30 years, Friends has provided support to the Portland Parks and Recreation Community Gardens program, while also expanding our mission to also include non-Parks & Recreation community gardens throughout the Portland area.

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